IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with strikethrough. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please CANCEL claim 18 and AMEND claims 10, 37, 38 and 45 in accordance with the following:

1. (previously presented) A personal information management apparatus which electronically manages personal information of a user, comprising:

a personal information database selection unit selecting a personal information database based on rules from a personal information storage unit including a plurality of personal information databases respectively storing personal information regarding potential alternative situations of the same user;

a processing unit processing the personal information database selected by said personal information database selection unit, such that the personal information can be read and written;

a memory storing the rules referenced for selecting the appropriate personal information database, which are set by the same user in advance upon starting a use of the personal information management apparatus;

a clock unit outputting current time data, wherein said rules are defined based on the time data output by said clock unit;

a personal information nonmatching detection unit detecting a difference in personal information of predetermined items common to two personal information databases stored in said personal information storage unit;

a personal information nonmatching notification unit notifying of the difference detected by said personal information nonmatching detection unit; and

a personal information synchronization unit amending one piece of different personal information detected by said personal information nonmatching detection unit to match the other piece.

2. (cancelled)

3. (previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a transmission and reception unit, provided in a network, transmitting and receiving data to and from an information processing terminal through the network,

wherein said personal information database selection unit selects the personal information database through the network, or directly selects the personal information database.

4. (previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said rules are defined based on information received by said transmission and reception unit about access path in the network from the information processing terminal.

5. (previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said rules are defined based on information received by said transmission and reception unit and designating the information processing terminal.

6. (previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a status information input unit inputting user status information comprising a situation of the same user and a status of the same user,

wherein said rules are defined according to user status information input through said status information input unit.

7-8. (cancelled)

9. (original) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a personal information nonmatching detection unit detecting a difference in personal information of predetermined items common to two personal information databases stored in said personal information storage unit; and

a personal information synchronization unit amending one piece of different personal information detected by said personal information nonmatching detection unit to match the other piece.

10. (currently amended) A personal information managing method which electronically manages personal information of a user, comprising:

setting rules, for selecting personal information databases, by the same user in advance upon starting a use of a personal information management apparatus;

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retaining the rules in a memory;

selecting a personal information database based on the rules from a personal information storage unit including a plurality of personal information databases respectively storing personal information regarding potential alternative situations of the same user;

processing the selected personal information database such that the personal information can be read and written;

outputting current time data, wherein the rules are defined based on the output time data;

detecting a difference in personal information of predetermined items common to two personal information databases stored in said personal information storage unit;

notifying of the detected difference;

~~detecting a difference in personal information of predetermined items common to two personal information databases stored in said personal information storage unit;~~ and

amending one piece of the detected different personal information to match the other piece.

11. (cancelled)

12. (original) The method according to claim 10, further comprising:

transmitting and receiving data to and from an information processing terminal through a network;

wherein the personal information database is selected through the network, or the personal information database is directly selected.

13. (original) The method according to claim 12, the rules are defined based on received information about an access path in the network from the information processing terminal.

14. (original) The method according to claim 12, the rules are defined based on received information designating the information processing terminal.

15. (previously presented) The method according to claim 10, further comprising:

inputting user status information comprising a situation of a the same user and a status of the same user,

wherein said rules are defined according to the input user status information.

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Claims 16-18 (cancelled).

19. (previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium storing a personal information management program used to direct a computer for electronically managing personal information of a user, by:

setting rules, for selecting personal information databases, by the same user in advance upon starting a use of a personal information management apparatus;

retaining the rules in a memory;

selecting a personal information database based on the rules from a personal information storage unit including a plurality of personal information databases respectively storing personal information about different situations of the same user;

processing the selected personal information database such that the personal information can be read and written;

outputting current time data, wherein said rules are defined based on the output time data;

detecting a difference in personal information of predetermined items common to two personal information databases stored in said personal information storage unit, wherein said detected difference is notified of; and

amending one piece of the detected different persona information to match the other piece.

20. (cancelled)

21. (previously presented) The storage medium according to claim 19, further comprising transmitting and receiving data to and from an information processing terminal through a network,

wherein data is transmitted and received to and from an information processing terminal through a network; and

said personal information database is selected through the network, or said personal information database is directly selected.

22. (original) The storage medium according to claim 21, wherein said rules are defined based on received information about an access path in the network from the information processing terminal.

23. (original) The storage medium according to claim 21, wherein said rules are defined based on received information designating the information processing terminal.

24. (previously presented) The storage medium according to claim 19, further comprising inputting user status information comprising a situation of the same user and a status of the same user,

    wherein said rules are defined according to the input user status information.

25-26. (cancelled)

27. (original) The storage medium to claim 19, further comprising:

    detecting a difference in personal information of predetermined items common to two personal information databases stored in said personal information storage unit; and

    amending one piece of the detected different personal information to match the other piece.

28. (previously presented) A personal information management program used to direct a computer for electronically managing personal information of a user by:

    setting rules, for selecting personal information databases, by the same user in advance upon starting a use of a personal information management apparatus;

    retaining the rules in a memory;

    selecting a personal information database based on the rules from a personal information storage unit including a plurality of personal information databases respectively storing personal information regarding potential alternative situations of the same user;

    processing the selected personal information database such that the personal information can be read and written;

    outputting current time data, wherein said rules are defined based on the output time data;

    detecting a difference in personal information of predetermined items common to two personal information databases stored in said personal information storage unit, wherein said detected difference is notified of; and

    amending one piece of the detected different personal information to match the other piece.

29. (cancelled)

30. (previously presented) The program according to claim 28, further comprising transmitting and receiving data to and from an information processing terminal through a network,

wherein data is transmitted and received to and from an information processing terminal through a network;, and said personal information database is selected through the network, or said personal information database is directly selected.

31. (original) The program according to claim 30, wherein said rules are defined based on received information about an access path in the network from the information processing terminal.

32. (original) The program according to claim 30, wherein said rules are defined based on received information designating the information processing terminal.

33. (previously presented) The program according to claim 28, further comprising inputting user status information comprising a situation of the same user and a status of the same user,

wherein said rules are defined according to the input user status information.

34-35. (cancelled)

36. (original) The program according to claim 28, further comprising:

detecting a difference in personal information of predetermined items common to two personal information databases stored in said personal information storage unit; and

amending one piece of the detected different personal information to match the other piece.

37. (currently amended) A personal information management apparatus which electronically manages personal information of a user, comprising:

setting means for setting rules for selecting personal information databases by the same user in advance upon starting a use of a personal information management apparatus and storing the set rules;

personal information database selection means for selecting a personal information database based on the rules from personal information storage means including a plurality of personal information databases respectively storing personal information regarding potential alternative situations of the same user;

processing means for processing the personal information database selected by said personal information database selection means such that the personal information can be read and written;

outputting means for outputting current time data, wherein said rules are defined based on the output time data;

detecting means for detecting a difference in personal information of predetermined items common to two personal information databases stored in said persona information storage unit, wherein said detected difference is notified of; and

amending means for amending one piece of the detected different personal information to match the other piece.

38. (currently amended) A personal information managing method which electronically manages personal information of a user, comprising:

setting rules used in selecting one of a plurality of personal information databases, the rules based on potential alternative situations of the same user;

selecting the one of the plurality of personal information databases based on the set rules upon starting the computer;

outputting current time data, wherein said rules are defined based on the output time data;

detecting a difference in personal information of predetermined items common to two the personal information databases stored in said personal information storage unit, wherein said detected difference is notified of; and

amending one piece of the detected different personal information to match the other piece.

39. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the plurality of personal information databases are of the same hierarchical level, include the same set of data fields, and are different only with respect to the stored personal information.

40. (previously presented) The method of claim 10 wherein the plurality of personal information databases are of the same hierarchical level, include the same set of data fields, and are different only with respect to the stored personal information.

41. (previously presented) The medium of claim 19 wherein the plurality of personal information databases are of the same hierarchical level, include the same set of data fields, and are different only with respect to the stored personal information.

42. (previously presented) The program of claim 28 wherein the plurality of personal information databases are of the same hierarchical level, include the same set of data fields, and are different only with respect to the stored personal information.

43. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 37 wherein the plurality of personal information databases are of the same hierarchical level, include the same set of data fields, and are different only with respect to the stored personal information.

44. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 38 wherein the plurality of personal information databases are of the same hierarchical level, include the same set of data fields, and are different only with respect to stored personal information.

45. (currently amended) A method of operating a data processing system, comprising:
receiving personal information from a user;
storing the user's personal information;
receiving a communication from the user comprising a request to access the user's stored personal information;
detecting ~~a characteristic of~~ the time of the communication ~~and the communication that is independent of the request to access the user's stored personal information~~;
limiting the user's access to the user's stored personal information according to the detected ~~characteristic~~ time of the communication;
~~outputting current time data, wherein said rules are defined based on the output time data;~~
detecting a difference in personal information of predetermined items common to two personal information databases ~~stored~~ included in said ~~personal information storage unit~~ user's stored personal information, wherein said detected difference is notified of; and

amending one piece of the detected different personal information to match the other piece.

Claims 46-47 (cancelled).

48. (previously presented) The method of claim 45, wherein the characteristic detected is the access path to the network where the communication was initiated.

49. (previously presented) The method of claim 45, wherein the characteristic detected is the type of terminal used to initiate the communication.

50. (previously presented) The method of claim 45, wherein the limiting restricts the user's access to personal information stored in one of a plurality of databases.

51. (previously presented) The method of claim 45, wherein the limiting restricts the user's access to personal information stored in one of a plurality of servers.